

Howard -

Forward to H.W.

Dick

11 Sept 72

Dear Jerry:

Your 2 Sept letter to Harold gives the very reason why you should listen to others in forming your attitude about Cyril's recent undertakings: "I lacked understanding of the evidence that was required to help analyse whatever Cyril found." What discloses your lack of knowledge is not, as would seem to be the case, your confession that you lack knowledge-- after all, anyone could dredge up such an admission, sincerely or not. What discloses your lack of knowledge is that you thought, and still think, that Cyril could find anything worth ~~knowing~~ knowing. Understand this: these materials have been culled, like flowers, to support the assertion that JFK was struck only from behind. They tell the truth, that JFK was struck twice from behind, but (unless we can take advantage of information that the cullers did not understand-- e.g., my memo on the minute fragments in the brain, and other important things) they will not tell the whole truth. Which is to say that they will lie. Cyril, in effect, heard lies, and he will be repeating them. He must repeat them-- after all, he asked for them. He is a loser, doing their thing, whether he repeats them or not.

You still lack knowledge about these things and about other things as well. If you did not lack knowledge you would not now be forming improper and, I think, harmful judgments about what is happening.

Here I speak not for Harold, though I think he would concur and would even express himself (justifiably) with more rancor than I do, but for myself: your failure to understand things, technical or otherwise, is not upsetting-- we all fail in many ways, Harold included. What is upsetting is not that you fail to understand, but that you fail to learn.

Learn, then, even the little that is offered in the enclosed draft of a letter that I started to write to Cyril. Mind you, it is only a beginning, so don't think that there is not much more to say. Whether I finish and mail the letter depends on whether I come to think that warnings will have any salutary effect on Cyril's behavior, on his thinking. Currently I think that they will not, so I simply despair and let the matter go.

Harold's statements may be cryptic to you; they are not cryptic to me. Why to you and not to me? Because, as I am sure, I know more about the technical aspects of the case than you do, and because, as I think, I am coming to understand the "political" aspects better than you, even though I do not understand them as well as Harold or, to a lesser degree, Howard.

Harold's advice is still the best: think, think, think. If thinking and learning don't help you to understand what's going on and what's likely to happen, then simply check out for a while. Don't encourage or discourage anyone; don't try to help, don't try to hinder-- just check out.

Of all those who were close to Harold and thought they understood his thinking, I was the last to pick up his cudgel, the first to tell him that he was wrong about Cyril. As things look now, it appears that Cyril will be a more devastating bane than Garrison was. Garrison, at least, can plead insanity and get many to vouch for him on that score. What can Cyril plead? Good intentions? Ignorance? Say nothings about his good intentions; they count for nothing if the outcome of his activities belies them. I feel sure that it will, and that there is cause for nothing but despair. Of his ignorance, I am beginning to think that he has that in spades.

As a substitute for understanding, and as an aid to learning, it ought to be sufficient for us merely to ask this: does Harold have the right to say "I told you so"? The fact is, he does. I am sure that he does not gloat over being right, but rather, like me, he is upset that he is right. I thought he was wrong, and I still do not fully understand why he was right. But the fact of his being right is evident, and such a fact ought to instruct us about whom to trust in things that we do not fully understand.

Don't tell me, either, as Ed Williams did, that all the chips havn't fallen yet-- that Cyril is going to publish on this matter, give interviews, and the like. The chips are in. There is little or nothing that he can tell us that we do not already know. What little he may have to say will be, at best, not worth saying; at worst, very harmful.

Here is something else that you will not understand, but I'll say it anyway (I was about to add "albeit cryptically", but it is not cryptic except to those who, through lack of understanding, make it so): the doctors on the 1968 Panel were our friends; notwithstanding his ignorance of matters pertaining to the assassination, notwithstanding his prejudice, and notwithstanding even his blatant dishonesty and hostility to the truth, Dr. Lattimer was our friend, a far better friend than Wecht. I wish that we had ten Panels and ten Lattimers for every Wecht.

Your understanding of the situation vis-a-vis the Kennedys is also deficient and harmful. If we erroneously place any of the blame on them, others (less pure of heart, but smarter than us) will place all of the blame on them. What happens then to the guilty-- or, as you might formulate it, to those who share their guilt? ~~Strikethrough~~ Cui bono? The truly guilty and those who hate Kennedys.

I take no pleasure in writing this. And I look ruefully toward the day when more I-told-you-so's are forthcoming. After this letter, though, there will be no more "I told you so". You'll get a "we told you so"-- Harold, Howard, and (after a prolonged period of keep-the-faith-baby) me.

Still,

*Dick*

Bernabei